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TO [REDACTED] FM OPERATIONS CENTER 075

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DDI [REDACTED]

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25X1A [REDACTED] FROM [REDACTED]

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: COMMENTS ON "POSSIBLE COUP IN SANTO DOMINGO"

1. THIS IS THE KIND OF EXAGGERATED AND BIASED INFORMATION THAT ULTRA-RIGHTISTS [REDACTED] HAVE BEEN REPORTING AND IT MAY HAVE ORIGINATED WITH ONE OF GENERAL WESSIN Y WESSIN'S SUPPORTERS. WE KNOW THAT WESSIN Y WESSIN IS ANXIOUS TO RETURN TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC AND IT IS RUMORED THAT HE MAY ATTEMPT AN ILLEGAL RE-ENTRY SOON.

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2. THERE IS NO RELIABLE EVIDENCE OF "COUP PLOTTING" WITHIN THE MILITARY. GENERAL PEREZ Y PEREZ HAS BEEN ONE OF PRESIDENT BALAGUER'S STRONGEST SUPPORTERS AND THERE IS NO INFORMATION LINKING HIM WITH POSSIBLE SUBVERSIVE ELEMENTS.

3. AS POLITICAL ACTIVITY BECOMES MORE INTENSE WITH THE APPROACH OF THE 1970 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, RUMORS OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT PLOTTING WILL PROBABLY INCREASE. WESSIN Y WESSIN'S RETURN TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS COULD WELL PRECIPITATE STRONG REACTIONS FROM

State Dept. declassification & release instructions on file

1

PAGE 2

BOTH HIS SUPPORTERS AND OPPONENTS, PARTICULARLY IF HE SHOULD ATTEMPT TO RETURN BEFORE PERMISSION IS GRANTED.

4. AVAILABLE INFORMATION PROVIDES CONVINCING CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE THAT FRANCISCO CAAMANO IS IN CUBA. HIS INTENTIONS, HOWEVER, REMAIN A SUBJECT OF SPECULATION.

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[REDACTED] REPORTING SUGGESTS THAT HE MAY BE PLANNING TO RETURN TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC THIS MONTH TO THREAD SOME TYPE OF SUBVERSIVE EFFORT. CASTRO SEEMS LIKELY TO LIMIT LOGISTICAL SUPPORT TO ANY CAAMANO-LED SUBVERSIVE EFFORT BECAUSE OF THE RISK OF US RETALIATION. IN ADDITION,

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[REDACTED] EARLY THIS YEAR CASTRO IMPLIED HE WAS NOT CONFIDENT THAT AN INSURGENT MOVEMENT COULD SUCCEED IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC.

5. THE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST AMBASSADOR JOHN CRIMMINS ARE ALMOST TOO RIDICULOUS TO COMMENT ON. HE IS A CAREER OFFICER OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND HIS REPORTING IS WELL REGARDED BY THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY. HE DOES NOT FAVOR A "CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT WHICH COULD ATTAIN SUCH GOALS (I.E. "SOCIALIST POLICIES AND GOALS OF THE ALLIANCE FOR PROGRESS). THE STATEMENT THAT HE HAS DEMANDED THAT PRESIDENT BALAGUER APPOINT COLONEL NIET NIVAR AS MINISTER OF THE ARMED FORCES IS 180 DEGREES OUT OF PHASE. NIET NIVAR IS PROBABLY THE LAST MAN IN THE DOMINICAN MILITARY THAT AMBASSADOR CRIMMINS WOULD EVEN SUGGEST FOR THIS POST.

6. ORIGINAL DOCUMENT AND SPECIAL REPORT OF 15 JULY BY NEXT POUCH.

NIXON FOR PRESIDENT COMMITTEE

ROUTE SLIP

Dick Allen

TO: _____

Take necessary action ☐

Approval or signature ☐

Comment ☐

Prepare reply ☐

Discuss with me ☐

For your information ☐

See remarks below ☐

FROM Ed Nixon

DATE 12/3/68

REMARKS:

Attached pertains to possible
coup in Santo Domingo as discussed
on telephone. Forwarded by Bebe
Rebozo - no acknowledgment required.
File or use as you wish.

Ed

CONFIDENTIAL REPORT ON:

INFORMATION ON POSSIBLE "COUP" IN SANTO DOMINGO.

Persons with access to extremely reliable information on the internal political conditions of Santo Domingo at this moment have offered the following account of the imminent possibilities of a coup against President Joaquin Balaguer's regime which could well take place within the next few weeks. As such a contingency could prove highly embarrassing to the incoming Administration and could well serve the purposes of power cliques in and out of the United States, it is deemed advisable to bring these events before President-elect Richard M. Nixon.

R E P O R T :

The information furnished to us indicates that there are currently three separate and distinct groups plotting to topple the Balaguer government. There does not appear to be any inter-connecting links between these various factions and each one is functioning autonomously.

Group 1) The General Elias Wessin y Wessin faction.

Although General Wessin was the recognized "hero" of the Dominican Revolution and the topmost leader of the military forces pitted against the Communist and neo-Communists and their collaborators who were aiming to take power in Santo Domingo after the downfall of President Reed Cabral, he was brought into Miami, under arrest, aboard a U.S. military transport airplane and forbidden to return to his homeland. After Balaguer was installed in the Presidency, Wessin firmly believed he would be allowed to return to Santo Domingo. His hopes were further heightened in December 1966, when Balaguer's Chief of Police and other high-ranking officers appeared to have convinced Balaguer of the advisability of permitting Wessin to return to Santo Domingo to visit his mother during the Christmas holidays. Balaguer appeared to favor this measure. However, General Perez y Perez, Minister of the Armed Forces, violently opposed Wessin's return and as a result, Balaguer, following this advice, refused to admit Wessin's entrance into Santo Domingo, although paradoxically, he named him Santo Domingo's delegate to the U.N. as an appeasing gesture.

Irrked by such arbitrary measures, Wessin began to meet with different Dominican elements and to plot Balaguer's downfall. His efforts in this enterprise have gained momentum during the last several months, possibly due to the fact that Balaguer, two months ago, incredibly announced that Colonel Caamano Deno and ex-President Juan Bosch could not only feel free to return to Santo Domingo, but that they would also be "welcomed." Camano was the military chieftain of the pre-eminently pro-Red forces which spear-headed the bloody Dominican Revolution. His foremost mouthpiece was Hector Aristy, Castro's most recognized leader in Santo Domingo and one of the bosses of the Castroite 14 of June Movement.

Bosch, who recently publicly admitted his Communist inclinations and ideology, was closely identified with the Red revolutionary forces in Santo Domingo. Wessin and his friends formed the Partido Democratico Quisqueyano, PDQ, presumably to act as a political force in the next Presidential elections, carrying Wessin

as the Presidential standard-bearer. Unfortunately, it appears that well-known extreme Leftist elements have registered in this new party and are working within Wessin's factions to bring about a violent overthrow of the Balaguer government.

The American Embassy in Santo Domingo has in its possession lists of the names and background of the pro-Left individuals active within the PDQ.

Group 2) The Bosch-Caamano faction.

Eyewitnesses attest to Colonel Caamano's presence in Cuba during more than a year and up until the month of May, 1968.

The first "hard" evidence of Caamano's whereabouts after he left his post as Dominican Military Attache in London was obtained by Dominican Colonel Ney Tejeda during a visit to Miami in January 1968. Colonel Ney found out that Caamano was in Havana, Cuba, living in a house belonging to a former mistress of General Salas Canizares, Cuban Chief of Police during the Batista regime who was killed in the Haitian Embassy. The house is situated on Third Avenue, three houses away from the Chateau Miramar in the suburb of Miramar. Frequent visitors in Caamano's hideaway were Commander Raul Castro, Commander Almeida, Chief of Staff of Castro's Armed Forces and other leading elements in the Castro regime. Caamano frequently visited the city of Santiago de Cuba, presumably to review forces being prepared to invade the Dominican Republic.

When Colonel Ney returned to Santo Domingo and informed the American Embassy on Caamano's activities and whereabouts, Embassy officials refused to believe the story. Later, they accepted the information as factual. U.S. intelligence agencies, three weeks later, confirmed Ney's reports. In May of this year, Colonel Ney Tejeda and Camilo Padreda traveled to Madrid where they met and conferred with Colonel Montes Arache, Dominican Military attache in Paris, formerly a leader of the Constitutionalist movement, and Captain Deschapelles, Military Attache in Holland. Deschapelles and Montes Arache informed Ney Tejeda and Padreda on Caamano's and Bosch's plans to invade Santo Domingo and head a revolution against Balaguer. This information was taped and given to an official of the U.S. Embassy in Madrid. Although the whereabouts of Caamano at this moment are unknown, both the U.S. Embassy in Santo Domingo and President Balaguer are aware of the plans being furthered by the Bosch-Caamano faction.

Group 3) Military factions.

The military plotters are divided into two separate groups.

Group A) This group is headed by General Enrique Perez y Perez, working together with Commodore Admiral Ramon Emilio Jimenez, Naval Chief; Valdes Vidaurra, Chief of the Department of Investigations and other officers in the Armed Forces. These elements originally were sympathizers of Juan Bosch and were appointed to their respective offices by Provisional President Hector Garcia Godoy, current Dominican Ambassador in Washington. These individuals have been in intimate contact with members of the U.S. Embassy in Santo Domingo and have held frequent and constant interviews with them in private homes and in other places outside of their official dependencies.

Group B) Headed by Colonel Ney Tejeda, Colonel Neit Nivar, General Braulio Alvarez, Colonel Rivera Caminero and others, personal friends of Joaquin Balaguer. These men have been approached by certain

members of the U.S. Embassy who have stimulated a desire among them to conspire against the Balaguer Administration. One of the most important gatherings held by this faction was in the home of Mr. Manuel Guaroa Liranzo, to whom they offered the Presidency of Santo Domingo in case Balaguer were ousted from power. Guaroa refused the offer, but replied that he could find leading businessmen in Santo Domingo, willing to form a new cabinet. The military elements in this faction have repeatedly stated that they would want to support President Balaguer if he would change his present weak and soft-on-leftism policy which, in their opinion, will open the floodgates of a new revolution in Santo Domingo.

In the gathering with Guaroa, the officers told him that the U.S. Ambassador had demanded from Balaguer the following appointments:

For the post of Minister of the Armed Forces: Colonel Neit Nivar; for the post of Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces: General Braulio Alvarez, currently Chief of Police of Santo Domingo; Colonel Ney Tejeda for Chief of Police. Chief of the Navy: Colonel Rivera Caminero. They said that these appointments had already been ordered by the President and that the U.S. Ambassador, Mr. Crimmins, had seen the appointments on the President's desk.

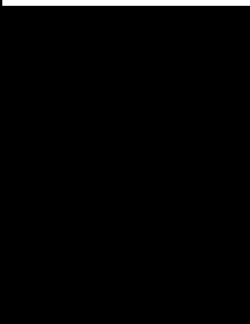

One of the most significant events took place in Miami, when Ney Tejeda and Guaroa were invited as guests of Art Brown to occupy the presidential suite of the King's Inn. The two men arrived in Miami on October 11. On October 13, at eleven p.m., Ney Tejeda received a call from Washington, urging him to visit the capital. Ney left on the next day for Washington remaining there for two days. After the mysterious conference in the nation's capital, he flew back to Santo Domingo via Miami.

* * * * *

It must be taken into consideration that Ambassador Crimmins has never been truly sympathetic to President Balaguer and that during his permanence in Santo Domingo, the U.S. Embassy has taken an extremely active part in the internal policies of the Dominican nation. Crimmins, who followed the socialistic policies set forth as the goals of the Alliance for Progress under both Kennedy and Johnson, views with favor a change in government which could attain such goals.

As any act of widespread violence which might erupt in Santo Domingo would be extremely embarrassing to President-elect Nixon, and as it could be that some of these actions might be timed around the date of the inauguration in order to serve, in one case, the interests of the Soviet Union, in that if the U.S. intervened, the Reds could claim it counteracted the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, and if there were no intervention there would be the risk of a Communist victory in Santo Domingo. In any case, a revolution in Santo Domingo would harm the new Nixon Administration.

Therefore, it seems advisable that this information be checked out for accuracy and that, if it is proven correct, measures be taken to safeguard the national and international interests of the incoming Nixon government.

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